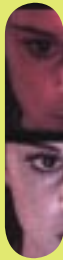




## 2005 DePauw Biennial



## Contemporary Art in the Midwest



Noelle Allen

Jimmy Baker

Conrad Bakker

Keith Benjamin

Denise Burge

Tammy Burke

Jennifer Danos

Carrie Dickason

Katy Fischer

Warren Fry

Linda Gall

Emily Kennerk

Chip Kohrman

Anthony Luensman

Lori Miles

New Catalogue

Melissa Oresky

Brian Presnell

Scott Roberts

Jason Salavon

Dana Sperry

Steve Stelling

Jeremy Tubbs

Heidi van Wieren

Ryan Woods

Much like the large, international-scaled biennials that have become ubiquitous vehicles for identifying and showcasing trends and particularities in contemporary art, the DePauw Biennial was initiated to bring attention to the innovative work of artists in a specific region – in this case, the three-state area of Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. Although its inaugural edition is more modest in scale and scope than its more comprehensive counterparts, its objective is the same: to legitimize the artists and work being produced in the region by inserting them into contemporary art discourse.

Many curators can confirm that taking on the task of organizing a regional biennial of contemporary art is a daunting one, particularly when you are a relative newcomer to the geographic area that you are focusing upon. My curatorial prerogative in organizing this exhibition was not to seek out work that expressed any sort of geographic style or sensibility; to the contrary, I was more interested in locating artists who create work that confirms their awareness of and participation in global contemporary art practice.

As the curator of the first DePauw Biennial, I felt it was crucial that the show was curated, rather than juried. Making direct contact with artists and their work, rather than relying on slides, resumes, reviews and artist statements, is a critical part of my own curatorial practice, as I feel that a more hands-on, experiential approach yields better results. My selection of artists was primarily driven by curatorial intuition and critical response. Mindful of the fact that the threat of provincialism is inherent to any regionally based biennial, a major goal was to avoid propagating or perpetuating a sub-genre of contemporary art – that is, a “Midwest

style” — one that would suggest stylistic homogeneity or encourage a one-dimensional reading of work in the region.

Although I did not intend to organize a show that was thematically or formally driven, or one that functioned solely to identify trends that define the current artistic climate in the Midwest, certain formal and conceptual commonalities and connections did reveal themselves. The work in the show reflects a number of overlapping tendencies, such as diverse approaches to process, narrative, materiality, abstraction, conceptual strategies, technology, and place. This diversity extends to the wide range



New Catalogue, *Big Ten Co-Ed With Ski Mask No. 5*, 2003  
50 x 40 inches, digital C-print  
Courtesy Bodybuilder & Sportsman Gallery, Chicago

of materials, processes and media represented, including sound, web-based art, video, site-specific installation and performance, as well as painting, drawing, sculpture, photography and digital art.

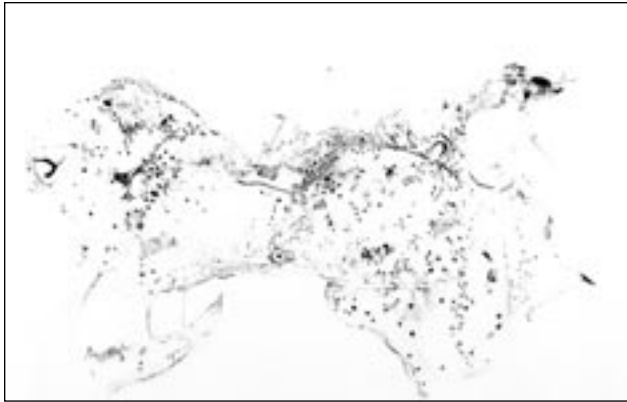
Many of the artists invited to participate were selected because of their strong engagement with materiality and process.

This is evidenced in work in which the artist's hand is strongly present, a clear indicator of a preoccupation with and interest in craft. Painting and drawing are also well represented, particularly work in which mark-making and surface are a primary consideration. In addition, many of the artists exhibit a strong concern with materials, using them in ways that make us rethink the well-demarcated divisions often imposed upon various media. Conceptually-driven work is also strongly present, whether critical or laced with a strong sense of humor. And, despite my desire to deemphasize regionalism, several works allude to a sense of place, in ways that are both nuanced and overt.

The Richard E. Peeler Art Center at DePauw University is a fitting venue for a regional biennial of contemporary art. First, it is committed to organizing and hosting exhibitions that are challenging, provocative and relevant in regional, national and global contexts. In addition, the



Warren Fry, *Matthew Barney on 'The Other Half'*, 2004  
Castilene, wood and acrylic paint, 44-1/2 x 12 x 10 inches



Noelle Allen, *The Mortivores*, 2004  
graphite on mylar, 28 x 42 inches

building itself – designed by Houston-based architect Carlos Jiménez – became an architectural muse to several of the participating artists. Responding to the physical fact of the building, in particular its neo-modernist lines and expansive, light-filled spaces, several artists created site-specific works that are located not in the “white cube” of the gallery, but in the public spaces that are used daily by those who use and visit the building.

Because they live and work in a region that is customarily off the contemporary art radar screen, many Midwest-based artists seldom get the critical attention that they deserve. Unlike larger urban centers, many areas of the Midwest – save for the “center” of Chicago – are



Jimmy Baker, *Wind of Change*, 2005  
oil and resin on panel, latex on Sintra and Ohio River water, 60 x 36 inches

bereft of strong networks of support and ideas. Despite this, the artists represented here produce work that is conversant with global art trends, processes, practices and sensibilities, work that simultaneously alludes to regional and local referents. The tenacity of this group of artists, evidenced in their commitment to live and work in a place that is considered to be in

the margins, is admirable. I feel strongly that their work is worthy of recognition beyond regional borders, and hope that future editions of the DePauw Biennial – which will be expanded beyond its current geographic parameters – will assist in breaking with the isolation of the local art scene, in turn reconnecting it to a larger art world, promoting discussions and inspiring dialogues.

Kaytie Johnson

Director and Curator of University Galleries, Museums and Collections  
DePauw University



Dana Sperry, *First Person Shooter or The New Rider of the Apocalypse*, 2004  
video projection, dimensions variable

I would like to thank the artists in the show for their generosity in opening their homes and studios to me. Making tough critical judgments is an inevitable part of curatorial practice. With this in mind, I would also like to acknowledge and thank the artists whose studios I visited, although they were not selected to participate in this incarnation of the DePauw Biennial. I would also like to thank my tireless and inspiring staff, Christopher Lynn and Christie Anderson, whose dedication and enthusiasm are invaluable. And, I would be remiss if I didn't thank the following individuals, who graciously offered assistance in referring artists, sharing insights, and offering direction in the curatorial process: Barry Blinderman, Roy and Ann Boyd, Margo Crutchfield, Charles Desmarais, Matt Distel, Van Harrison, Rebecca Ibel, Paul Klein, Jacquie Mahan, Linda Schwartz, Ann Taulbee, and Tony Wight.

## Exhibition Checklist

All works except where noted are collection of the artist.

### Noelle Allen

*Untitled (from Charts of Peripheral Isolates)*, 2004  
graphite on mylar  
12 x 24 inches

*The Mortivores*, 2004  
graphite on mylar  
28 x 42 inches

*Feast and Courtship*, 2004  
graphite on mylar  
30 x 42 inches

### Jimmy Baker

*Wind of Change*, 2005  
oil and resin on panel, latex on Sintra and Ohio River water  
60 x 36 inches

*White Heat*, 2005  
Huffy mountain bike and mixed media  
36 x 58 x 26 inches

### Conrad Bakker

*Untitled Project: eBay/Postcards/Indiana*, 2004  
oil on wood panel  
dimensions variable

### Keith Benjamin

*Get Rich*, 2003  
fooz ball table, paper bags, tape and cereal boxes  
42 x 16 x 13 inches

*Plenty II*, 2003  
newspaper pulp, cereal boxes and wood  
4 x 16 x 13 inches

*Plenty III*, 2003  
newspaper pulp, cereal boxes and wood  
8 x 19 x 19 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Linda Schwartz Gallery, Cincinnati

### Denise Burge

*The Mountain*, 2003-2005  
fabric, paint and mixed media  
168 x 240 inches

### Tammy Burke

*Rescaled Mountain Range*, 2004  
fabric  
120 x 7 inches

*Sunrise I Wanted to Stop*, 2004  
fabric  
125 x 16 inches

### Jennifer Danos

*Untitled (Debris 2)*, 2005  
sculpty clay and mixed media  
dimensions variable

*Untitled (Poured Concrete 3)*, 2005  
contact paper  
dimensions variable

*Untitled (Dead Bugs 1)*, 2005  
sculpty clay and mixed media  
dimensions variable

*Untitled (Outlets 1)*, 2005  
contact paper  
dimensions variable

### Carrie Dickason

*Sprawl*, 1996 – 2004  
discarded plastic packaging and wire  
dimensions variable

### Katy Fischer

*290*, 2002  
ballpoint pen on panel  
12 x 16 inches

*Sidewalk Crack 4*, 2003  
gouache and graphite on paper  
22 x 30 inches

*Sidewalk Crack 5*, 2003  
gouache and graphite on paper  
22 x 30 inches

### Warren Fry

*First Viewing of 'Lever'*, 2003  
Castilene, wood, acrylic and styrene  
54 x 14 x 11 inches

*Matthew Barney on 'The Other Half'*, 2004  
Castilene, wood and acrylic paint  
44-1/2 x 12 x 10 inches

*Love Hours*, 2004  
epoxy, styrene, wood, flocking and stereo with audio CD  
4 x 53 x 36 inches

### Linda Gall

*Skylab – Spring*, 2004  
watercolor on arches paper  
22-1/4 x 30 inches

*Skylab – Lava Mountains*, 2004  
watercolor on arches paper  
22-1/4 x 30 inches

Courtesy of Rebecca Ibel Gallery, Columbus, Ohio

### Emily Kennerk

*Supersuburbia*, 2005  
acrylic paint  
dimensions variable

*Portraits*, 2001  
Olan Mills portraits and props  
dimensions variable

### Chip Korhman

*Untitled (HPF Micro-Project I)*, 2005  
cement, yarn, plastic fork, Styrofoam plate, laptop computer, PowerPoint questionnaire, and custom-made artwork  
dimensions variable

### Anthony Luensman

*Stairstorm*, 2005  
assorted electronics, EL wire, miniature motors, LEDs, subwoofer driver and plastic tub  
dimensions variable

### Lori Miles

*Distaff*, 2004  
string and wood  
84 x 20 x 20 inches

### New Catalogue

*Big Ten Co-Ed With Ski Mask No. 5*, 2003  
50 x 40 inches  
digital C-print

*Big Ten Co-Ed With Ski Mask No. 11*, 2003  
50 x 40 inches  
digital C-print

Courtesy of Bodybuilder & Sportsman Gallery, Chicago

### Melissa Oresky

*Falls*, 2004  
acrylic, oil and enamel on canvas  
60 x 60 inches

*Stream*, 2003  
acrylic, oil and enamel on canvas  
48 x 60 inches

### Brian Presnell

*Wheelieman*, c. 2000-04  
video

*Oceanscape (Advantage Knight)*, 2004  
found painting and mixed media  
31 x 27 inches

*Northern Europe (Advantage Wheelieman)*, 2004  
found painting and mixed media  
26-3/8 x 30-3/8 inches

*Rural Iowa (Advantage Wheelieman)*, 2004  
found painting and mixed media  
24-3/4 x 28-3/4 inches

### Scott Roberts

*Devil Cat Renovation*, 2005  
mat board, wood, wallpaper and mixed media  
42 x 60 x 60 inches

### Jason Salavon

*Emblem (Taxi Driver)*, 2004  
digital C-print  
48 x 48 inches

Courtesy of the artist and The Project, New York and Los Angeles

### Dana Sperry

*First Person Shooter or The New Rider of the Apocalypse*, 2004  
video projection  
dimensions variable

### Steve Stelling

*Green Chopter Variant*, 2004  
ink, acrylic and crayon on paper  
36-1/2 x 46-3/4 inches

*Mountain Room*, 2004  
ink, acrylic, crayon and marker on paper  
49 x 36 inches

### Jeremy Tubbs

*Self-Defacing Action*, 2004  
pigmented wax on raised grid panel  
132 x 84 inches

### Heidi van Wieren

*Rosy Posey II*, 2003  
Elmer's glue/PVA and ink on panel  
38 x 46 inches

*Blush II*, 2003  
Elmer's glue/PVA and ink on panel  
42 x 36 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Roy Boyd Gallery, Chicago

### Ryan Woods

*Fires! #1*, 2004  
oil, acrylic, graphite, shellac, roofing tar and mixed media on canvas  
62 x 41-1/2 inches

*Fires! #2*, 2004  
oil, acrylic, graphite, shellac, roofing tar and mixed media on canvas  
24 x 25-1/2 inches

*Nisse*, 2004  
oil, acrylic, graphite, shellac, roofing tar and mixed media on canvas  
36 x 37-1/2 inches

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February 15 – May 8, 2005  
Richard E. Peeler Art Center, DePauw University



Gallery hours: Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun., 1-5 p.m.  
Location: 10 West Hanna Street, P.O. Box 37, Greencastle, IN 46135-0037  
For more information: (765) 658-4336, [www.depauw.edu/galleries/](http://www.depauw.edu/galleries/)